

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FACULTY EXCHANGE PROGRAM
Africa Phytosanitary Capacity Building
2007 Program Description**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Faculty Exchange Program (FEP) has brought qualified agricultural educators from progressive agricultural universities in Eurasia to the United States for 4 months to increase their knowledge of, and ability to teach and perform research in, agricultural science subjects such as animal health, food quality, food inspection, phytosanitary measures, and grades and standards. The Faculty Exchange Program for agricultural sciences began in 2002, and 35 participants from Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, Armenia, and Afghanistan have completed the program to date.

We are pleased to announce that we have received funding to begin a program in Africa in 2007 which will concentrate on Phytosanitary (Plant Health) Capacity Building at selected African agricultural universities. The countries eligible to participate in this program from across Africa are Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Sierra Leone, Cameroun, Chad, Congo (DROC), Congo (ROC), Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Angola, Mozambique, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal.

During the first year of the program, we will accept participant applications from Ghana, Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Cameroun, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, and Nigeria. We will consider applicants from other eligible countries in future years.

Background:

USDA's Programs to Build Sanitary, Phytosanitary (SPS) Capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa in Support of The African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA)

USDA has had long history of support for SPS programs in Africa. Since the 1980s, USDA APHIS has had permanent posts in Africa staffed by Attachés and African counterparts. Similarly, USDA FAS has had permanent personnel located in Africa to address barriers to trade and other multilateral issues.

Since the year 2000, USDA has been working in Sub-Saharan Africa through a series of programs and activities to focus on building phytosanitary capacity. The effort began with a series of seminars to train African government and private sector representatives about global sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues, the role of the World Trade Organization and implications for trade. Part of the series provided introductory training in pest risk assessment for horticultural commodities, and how to navigate the US regulatory system. At the conclusion of USDA's training programs in Africa, it became apparent that African countries needed USDA expertise on the ground to help national plant health authorities in drafting pest risk analyses as well as

someone to serve as an intermediary in working with USDA's Animal/Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) through the entire regulatory process to facilitate the export of African crops. As a result of this need, USDA posted APHIS risk analysis experts to Africa that are currently working with countries in East, West and Southern Africa to strengthen SPS capacities in support of local, regional and international trade of agricultural products.

As USDA's capacity building relationship with Africa continues, the focus is shifting to assist countries in strengthening government programs and policies dealing with SPS issues. USDA is working with USAID to initiate the new SPS program for Africa to build on previous work to help countries harmonize phytosanitary standards and procedures, strengthen pest surveillance and detection capabilities, including border inspection operations, develop a regional risk assessment capability, and overcome other bottlenecks related to regulatory issues and the trade of agricultural products.

A crucial component of building a sustainable phytosanitary infrastructure at the national and regional level is developing a capacity for workforce education and training. USDA intends to implement several training programs as part of the new phytosanitary program to train African plant health authorities, however, African academic institutions often lack the foundation to educate people entering the workforce and to provide in-service training to current and future civil servants involved in risk assessment, surveillance and detection, and border inspection. **To help improve this situation, USDA intends to begin an African Phytosanitary Faculty Exchange Program which will focus on the SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) issues and systems necessary to increase the export of horticultural products from African countries to the world markets.**

The goal of this new program is to promote the development of sound agricultural science policy, teaching, and research techniques in the participant's countries. The objectives of the Faculty Exchange Program are to:

1. Increase the number of adults who are well versed in current agricultural science issues related to SPS and who can employ the latest research techniques by improving the quantity and quality of academic and adult education programs in the agricultural sciences;
2. Develop the ability of participating instructors to evaluate and revise curricula and courses through the application of basic principles of learning and curriculum development;
3. Develop participants' knowledge of, and ability to apply, U.S. and internationally accepted agricultural scientific research methods, and trade regulations/standards related to SPS,;
4. Establish U.S.-African university relationships that can catalyze and support curriculum development, course revision, training, and research in the agricultural sciences.
5. Provide an opportunity for the selected instructors to enter and more fully participate in the worldwide networks of agricultural science, research, and technology.

Increasing the number of people who have a well-rounded view of current SPS agricultural science issues and who can perform research using the latest methods and standards, who can

teach and create educational materials on the agricultural sciences related to SPS, and who have the mind-set to adapt to current conditions is critical to the formulation and implementation of sound policy and increased world trade.

The FEP is accepting applications for the 2007 program. We anticipate that the program will begin in August 2007 and end in mid-December 2007. Individual candidate and university administration interviews are tentatively planned to take place anywhere from March-May 2007.

Requirements:

- Applicants must have at least a Masters degree, be teaching at the university level, and have a background in entomology, plant pathology, horticulture, food technology, or another discipline related to horticultural SPS issues such as pest and disease identification, pest and disease mitigation, food handling and storage, or related areas.
- Applicants must be proficient in oral and written English. All aspects of the program will take place in English; interpreters will not be used.
- Applicants must be in good health and, if accepted, will be required to have a physical exam prior to traveling to the U.S.
- The applicant's university must be willing to continue to pay the salary of the participant while they take part in the program and to guarantee continued employment upon return of the participant.
- Upon completion of the U.S. portion of the program, the applicant must be willing to return to their university to teach for a minimum of 2 years.

The FEP is not a degree-granting program. Rather it builds upon a participant's current academic knowledge, professional training, and experience so that they will be more competent instructors of agricultural science subjects in a world economy. It assists participants in revising and improving their current courses and in introducing new subjects to assist in the development of the agricultural and agribusiness sectors of the country. The FEP is intended to increase the validity and overall usefulness of a university's academic and adult education programs.

The program's components can be broken down as follows. Approximately 80-90% of the participant's time will be spent observing classes and other university based activities and approximately 10-20% of their time will be spent on practical field trips.

1. Skills upgrading and course development

Participants will upgrade their technical subject knowledge, improve teaching skills, and develop new and revised courses for introduction at home institutions or for adult education programs. Participants will attend 3-4 courses of their choosing as visiting faculty and develop 2 new or revised course outlines to put into use at the home institution at the end of the program. Participants do not receive credit for attending courses but use the opportunity to observe teacher-student interaction and to learn new teaching and student assessment methods. They will meet with the U.S. professors one-on-one to learn how to develop course outlines and how to choose and develop class materials. Participants will also attend short courses, seminars, and brown bag lunches on research methodologies, literature review, and teaching methodologies and other topic areas as appropriate and available.

Courses and curricula will be developed in order to be used not only with students but also with government and private sector officials. Courses developed will include a focus on aspects of SPS technical issues. USDA and partner U.S. land grant institutions will determine the depth at which each of these issues needs to be addressed. The goal will be for participants to develop updated courses for university students with an emphasis on how a subject relates to SPS issues, and adult education programs for government or private sector personnel.

Participants will gain an understanding of our agricultural university system and how it collaborates and interacts with the government and private sector through teaching, research and extension activities. Participants will also learn about the use of the Internet in distance education programs.

2. Develop a general understanding of the overall U.S. food safety system, especially related to plant SPS issues

In addition to specific interests, participants will be exposed to, and gain an understanding of food safety and how it relates to public health and world trade. Participants will gain an understanding of Pest Risk Assessment (PRAs) and the APHIS requirements for import approval of horticultural products. Participants will be exposed to post harvest handling, safe food storage, transport, pest mitigation techniques, irradiation, packaging, inspection/sampling methodologies, good manufacturing practices, etc. Activities to help participants gain this broad perspective could include visits to border inspections, or food safety labs; short courses/scheduled courses on PRAs; pest and plant disease identification methods and surveillance/monitoring systems/methodologies; integrated pest management strategies; meetings with APHIS, FSIS, FDA, USDA; and meetings and visits with those involved in the horticultural industry. Participants will review the relation of science to food safety, public health, and world trade, and will gain an understanding of the inspection systems at the county, state, federal and international levels. Participants will gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various governmental/international organizations and how they interact. These activities will take place throughout the program.

3. Exposure to Research Methodologies related to SPS

Research is another area of focus for this program. Although there will not be time for participants to work on individual research projects, each participant should be exposed to current research efforts in the plant SPS in their subject area. Participants will review research methods and techniques, collect publications, and establish contacts with other researchers within the U.S. This could eventually lead to joint research and publications between the participant and U.S. researchers and will provide the participants with contacts in U.S. who could serve as information resources in the future.

4. U.S. Faculty Follow-on Visits to Africa

Once participants have returned home and begun teaching the new curricula, a mentor faculty member from host U.S. land-grant universities will travel to selected African universities to assist participants in modifying and institutionalizing the new curricula. A faculty visit will occur 3 to 5 months after the participant returns home. As a second component of this trip, U.S. faculty will

deliver short, training sessions based on the developed curricula. These sessions will target plant health and inspection officials from the government as well as the private sector.

To Apply for the Program

Applicants must be in good health and are required to have a physical exam prior to traveling to the U.S. If invited to participate in the FEP, the USDA will provide a form to be completed by a physician certifying that the participant is in good health. The USDA will provide emergency medical insurance only, which will not cover pre-existing or chronic medical conditions, medication, eyeglasses, or dental work. If there is a medical emergency, the participant is responsible for paying a percentage of any bills. Spouses and or children cannot accompany the participant on this program.

If selected to participate, FEP will pay round trip airfare to the U.S. from the participant's national capital city, program fees, book allowance, emergency medical insurance, and a stipend to cover food, lodging, and incidental expenses for the duration of the program.

Applicants should complete the application in English. We will only accept applications for the program that are completed in English. (However, the applicant's dean, vice dean, and department head can complete and sign their sections in their native language, if desired, with an English translation attached.)

The applicant's training objectives and their university administration's expectations of them upon return should be discussed and agreed upon prior to the interviews. We anticipate that interviews will take place in your country during April or May, 2007. Completed applications should be submitted to Edward Gerard in Washington, D.C., no later than February 15, 2007 by: (1.) E-mail attachment (Edward.gerard@usda.gov), or, (2.) FAX: 202-690-0892, or (3.) by post to Edward Gerard, US Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Rm 3240, Stop 1084, Washington, DC 20520.